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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BOGOTA 006680

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [KJUS](#) [CO](#) [AUC](#)

SUBJECT: FIVE MORE DEMOBILIZATIONS PLANNED

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood for reasons

1.4 (b) and (d)

Summary

1. (C) The GOC is preparing to demobilize at least five blocs in the coming weeks, including the last of senior AUC commander Don Berna's, and has expressed confidence that the rest of the AUC will be fully demobilized by the end of 2005.

The first of the five scheduled blocs, the Montes de Maria Bloc, formally demobilized on July 14. In order to facilitate other demobilizations, the GOC temporarily suspended arrest warrants for six bloc commanders and identified three concentration zones. The commanders of the several-thousand strong Central Bolivar Bloc and the other remaining AUC blocs published two communiques pledging to demobilize. According to the government, this essentially would mark the end of the AUC as a major organization. The OAS and the Peace Commissioner have expressed concern about resource shortages to orchestrate so many demobilizations in such a short time frame. End summary.

A Flurry Of Demobilizations

2. (C) The GOC is pushing forward at least five paramilitary bloc demobilizations in the coming weeks. The following are the blocs scheduled to demobilize by the end of August:

-- The Self-Defense Forces of Montes de Maria began concentrating on July 7 in a seven-hectare farm specially designated as a concentration zone in the municipality of Maria La Baja, Bolivar Department. The bloc had almost 600 members and publicly demobilized on July 14. Eduardo Cotes Tellez ("Diego Vecino") and Rodrigo Mercado Pelufo ("Rodrigo Cadena") are the bloc's commanders. Both were permitted to leave the concentration zone in Ralito to lead the demobilization under heavy DAS security, but neither was eligible for pardon under Law 782 because they have pending arrest warrants. Instead, they will return to Ralito to await processing under the Law for Justice and Peace. The group was active in Sucre, Bolivar, and Cordoba Departments.

-- The Heroes of Granada and the Pacific Bloc are the last remaining active blocs of senior AUC command Diego Murillo ("Don Berna"). Murillo pledged to demobilize all of his troops after turning himself in to authorities in May for the murder of the local government official. The Heroes of Granada are active in and around Medellin and have an estimated 2,000 members. They will demobilize in a specially designated zone in San Roque, Antioquia Department. Daniel Alberto Mejia Angel is the bloc's operational commander. The GOC suspended his arrest warrant until the end of August to permit him to lead the bloc's demobilization. The Pacific Bloc has between 200 to 300 members, is active on the coast of Cauca and Valle del Cauca, and involved in drug trafficking off the Pacific coast. It will demobilize in a yet unidentified zone in Choco Department, south of the city of Quibdo. The arrest warrant for its operational commander, Luis Eduardo Echavarria Durango, was also suspended until the end of August so he could lead the demobilization.

-- The Liberators of the South will be the next bloc to demobilize, according to members of the OAS verification mission. The group is part of the Central Bolivar Bloc (BCB), which totals several thousand members and has units throughout the country. The Liberators of the South will demobilize in a yet unidentified concentration zone near the airport of Pasto, Narino Department. The group has an estimated 100 or 200 members, operates in Narino Department, and is involved in drug trafficking off the Pacific coast.

-- The Self-Defense Forces of Meta and Vichada are commanded by Jose Baldomero Linares, whose arrest warrant was suspended until the end of August. The bloc has around 800 members.

And More On the Way

3. (C) The remaining AUC commanders with active blocs issued two communiques pledging to demobilize. Peace Commissioner Restrepo is confident he will have demobilized all of the AUC

by the end of 2005 (septel). On July 7, BCB commanders Javier Montanez ("Macaco"), Julian Bolivar, Pablo Sevillano, and Ernesto Baez said they would demobilize all their troops, active in Santander, Norte de Santander, southern Bolivar, Vichada, Antioquia, Boyaca, Caldas, Risaralda, Caqueta, Narino, and Putumayo Departments. They said they would begin concentrating their troops as soon as the government named concentration zones. As a first step, the GOC suspended the arrest warrant for Rodrigo Perez Alzate ("Guillermo Alzate") for two months to allow him to represent the BCB during demobilizations. According to the OAS, the BCB has 5,500 members. Other estimates indicate it has up to 7,000. It is the single largest AUC bloc and one of the most powerful. OAS verification mission director Sergio Caramagna has expressed concern that neither his office nor the GOC have the resources to demobilize so many paramilitaries simultaneously (septel). Restrepo has said he would need to triple his staff to carry out the demobilizations effectively.

14. (U) On July 9, senior AUC commanders Ramon Isaza, Ramiro Vanoy Murillo ("Cuco"), Pablo Mejia, and Jorge Tovar ("Jorge 40") pledged to demobilize the Middle Magdalena Bloc, the Miners' Bloc, the Vanquishers of Arauca, and the Northern Bloc. These four blocs would be the final active AUC blocs. As a first step, the GOC suspended Isaza's arrest warrant for two months.

WOOD